

Hurricane Harvey Response 2017 - Community Liaison (CL) Report

TO: Janetta Coates and Mitty Mohon

FROM: David Bryan/Jeremy Ford/Devin Pollock/Jim Stevens

SUBJECT: Hurricane Harvey Response 2017

COUNTY: Jasper and Newton Counties

DATE: 9/19/17

SUMMARY:

One Team Jasper/Newton member was sited at the Deweyville Disaster Response Center today. Several difficult cases with people who are just now returning to their homes and needing information about how to clean black mold. One elderly, disabled woman was distraught regarding how she was going to get her house cleaned out without anyone to help her. Team is working with the Orange County team to connect her to religious organization or nonprofit to get her some help. She is sleeping in her home despite the black mold. Most of the questions are regarding what materials should be used to clean black mold and resources to accomplish it. Operations were much smoother with almost 60 people visiting the center with six interested in EPA's materials.

The remaining Team Jasper/Newton members were sited at the Jasper County Courthouse Annex where the FEMA Disaster Survivor Assistance team continued to register flood victims for FEMA assistance. FEMA will open a full Disaster Response Center Wednesday, 9/20/17, with EPA and Small Business Administration personnel participating. Discussions are occurring with the EPA with county health officials. Jasper/Newton Community Liaison team will staff both centers but work toward sustaining the operations without CLs participating.

Team met with Co-Lead Mitty Mohon Tuesday afternoon, 9/19/17, to discuss how we have progressed and what information needs to be passed to our relief. Critical issues include reaching many people with limited resources.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

The Health Department still would like any information regarding private **aerobic treatment systems**. It is my understanding that Robert Houston in Region 6 was probably the appropriate contact. The systems we are talking about are private systems on private property. They have questions regarding how to decontaminate systems that failed during the storm and flooding. The question is whether EPA or TCEQ have documents explaining how to get the aerobic systems up and running properly after they were contaminated by flood water.

COMMUNITY CONCERNS

- Debris is still piled along the streets and roads throughout both counties. We have not heard confirmation on whether a contract has been let by the counties to pick up debris. It also does not appear that debris is being segregated from building and construction debris. Questions remain regarding hazardous waste being reported throughout the county that needs to be investigated, possibly by EPA CLs.
- Roads, bridges and infrastructure continues to be a concern in both counties with many of the roads that are normally used for school bus routes in need of drastic repair after being washed out by extensive flooding. Temporary fixes still provide safety concerns, especially when washed out roads have holes that require 10-15 dump trucks of rock to make them passable.

TEAM CONCERNS

- Team needs to have a better understanding of what is happening operationally in designated counties. Situational awareness allows resources to be used efficiently while also meeting the community needs in partnership with other agencies.
- Old-fashioned paper road maps have proved necessary in rural areas where there is little, sporadic or no wireless cell phone coverage.
- Team Jasper/Newton will be demobilizing end-of-day Friday and leaving on a jet plane Saturday morning.

As always, thanks for listening and your possible attention to these issues.

David, Jim, Jeremy and Devin